

Remarks at a Rally for Democratic Candidates in Seattle, Washington November 6, 1994

Thank you. You know, it is great to be back in Seattle, and it is great to be here at this spot where we had this many people in 1992. And I hope we have the same results. Governor Lowry, Senator Murray, distinguished Members of Congress and candidates for Congress, and Mayor Rice, Gary Locke, ladies and gentlemen, I am honored to be here, honored to be here on behalf of our candidates, the forces of change, and especially on behalf of Ron Sims for the United States Senate.

You know, a couple of years ago when you sent me to Washington, I went there to promote change in this country, to lift up the hopes of the American people. I went there to be a builder, not a blamer; to be a uniter, not a divider. I didn't much like the gridlock I had seen, and I wanted to break it.

We knew that the obstacles to change were great, that we had profound social problems that had been developing over 30 years, resulting in too many of our children living in an atmosphere of crime and violence, without the strong family and community support they needed. We knew we had difficult economic problems that had developed over 20 years, where too many people worked hard and were never sure they could keep their job or would ever get a raise, or were always afraid that they might lose their health insurance or their retirement. We knew that for 12 years the other party had controlled the Presidency, and for 20 of the last 24 years, and they had built an enormous apparatus for their trickle-down economics and their politics of division. And we knew that for 4 years we'd had the slowest job growth since the Great Depression.

Well, folks, America's still got some problems. There are still people who need work who don't have it. There are still people who deserve a raise who haven't gotten it. A million Americans, working families—working families—lost their health insurance last year. There are still some problems. But I can tell you one thing, this country is in better shape than it was 21 months ago when we began. We're in better shape because jobs are up. The deficit is down. We've got a smaller Government doing more for ordinary citizens. And this world is more secure,

more peaceful, and more democratic for the American people to live and flourish in.

I asked you to help me become President because I wanted to see our country strong again. I had heard enough tough talk accompanied by weak action. I wanted to see real strength. What is the real strength of our country? Strong families, strong schools, good jobs, safe streets, national security meaning peace and prosperity growing around the world. On all those fronts, we are stronger today because we did not just talk tough, we did the right things to make this country move forward.

When our economic program was before the Congress and every single Republican voted against it, striving as hard as they could for gridlock, they all said, "If this passes, we'll have recession; if this passes, the deficit will go up; if this happens, big Government will swallow us up and crush our economy." Well, what are they going to say today? The Government is smaller; the deficit is way down; the economy is up. They were wrong. Vote for Ron Sims to help keep making it right.

If people in politics were judged the way people at work are judged and the way students in school are judged, every single Democrat in this congressional delegation would be elected again resoundingly on Tuesday because the people of Washington are in better shape. The unemployment rate is down, the economy is growing because of the courage of the people here on this platform and their colleagues throughout the State of Washington. You ought to elect them and send Harriet Spanel to join them.

You know, this is sort of an interesting election, my fellow Americans. They wanted so badly, our adversaries, to say we had failed. And then when we didn't fail, when the economy began to grow, when the policies began to work, when the airplane contracts and the sales of Washington apples began to be announced, they didn't know what to do. They wanted to say all these things that they didn't get to say. So what did they then do? They said, "Well, Government is still the problem. And if anything good happened, it was in spite of that Bill Clinton in Washington and the Democrats. They didn't have anything to do with it." You know,

folks, where I come from we say if you're walking down a road and you find a turtle on a fencepost, chances are it didn't get there by accident. [Laughter]

They want you to just keep on being cynical. They want you to keep on being negative. They want you to keep on supporting gridlock, even though you don't. They have tried all over this country to bury us in a mountain of negativism, hoping that Americans will not see the Sun shining through.

They talk tough on crime and vote against the crime bill. They talk against the deficit, and they vote against reducing it. They talk for education, and they vote against more affordable college loans. They say they're pro-family, and then they vote against policies designed to help families, like immunizing children and lowering the taxes of low-income working people so they can raise their kids out of poverty. In short, they talk tough, but they do things that make America weaker. We make America stronger. Let's vote for strength on Tuesday.

You know, they say—I don't know how you figure it—they want you to vote for them on the promise that they will return us to the policies that got us in the fix we were in when you voted for me in the first place. They have two lines of attack. They say, "The Democrats are the party of Government, and it's bad. So if anything good happens, they didn't have anything to do with it. But put us in, and we will implement our commitments. We will cut taxes, increase defense, bring back Star Wars, and balance the budget."

And we say, well—you think about this; it's an issue in every one of these House races and this Senate race—they say, "Give us power, and we will give you goodies." And we say to them, as you might say to your child, we say, "Well, how are you going to pay for this?" And they say, "We'll tell you after the election." [Laughter] I say it's Sunday afternoon, and it's pretty, we're all dressed up; tell us right now. We want to know. Tell us right now.

You know, how much do their promises cost? One trillion dollars. Look at this vast sea of people. I could take every last one of you out here tonight, and we could have a good time on a trillion dollars. The problem is, it's a trillion dollars. So I'll tell you what the facts are, folks, about their promises. There are only two options: Either they're serious, or they're kidding. [Laughter]

Now, if they're serious, here's what happens. To pay for a trillion dollars' worth of promises, you have to cut everything else in the Government 20 percent: \$2,000 a Social Security recipient a year, 20 percent off the Medicare of the older people in this audience, 20 percent off the student loans of the kids we want to go to college, 20 percent off the Head Start when we're trying to fully fund Head Start.

Now, they say, "Oh, oh, but we didn't say we'd cut Social Security." They didn't say they wouldn't. [Laughter] So we say, well, okay, let's take Social Security off. Then you have to cut everything else 30 percent. You can just destroy Medicare and the college loan program and the Head Start program.

Now, there's the other possibility, which is that they could be just like they were the last time they were in control: They could be kidding, they could be kidding. [Laughter] But if they're kidding, you know what happens? We explode the deficit; we start shipping jobs instead of Washington products overseas; we put this economy back in the same ditch it was in the last time they gave us trickle-down economics. So let us say, "No thank you. We want a strong America. We want strong families, strong education systems, good jobs, safe streets, and a strong country. We're going to vote for Ron Sims and these agents of change here."

Folks, when the Seattle Post-Intelligencer endorsed Ron Sims—listen to this—they praised, and I quote, "his practical idealism, his political wisdom, his humanitarian instincts." That's another way of saying he's a real person. Believe me, we could use a few more of them in the Congress.

One of the reasons that your Senator is so successful is she comes across as a real person in the Congress. Patty Murray comes across as somebody who's raised a family, understands the problems of ordinary Americans, and is determined to work with people to get things done. We have too much gridlock there, too much partisan politics there. We need a person with a head and a heart who has lived the very message he preaches. We don't need any more people who talk tough and make us weak. We need people who are strong inside, who will make us strong and take us into the future. That's why we need Ron Sims. We need to say no to the negativism in Washington and yes to Ron Sims.

You know, I want to ask you to think about the atmosphere that they have tried to create in this election and measure it against our greatest national leaders of both parties. Franklin Roosevelt said, when one in four Americans was out of work, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." This crowd says, "Please vote your fears and give us power." Right? Teddy Roosevelt, a great Republican President, said the credit belongs to the person in the arena who is trying. These people say, "Punish the people who try; Government's bad." Abraham Lincoln said, "With malice toward none; with charity for all." He said, "Let us listen to the better angels of our nature." Sounds like he'd be a Democrat if he were around today, doesn't it? [Applause]

Folks, you've got a big chance on Tuesday to do something for yourselves, your children, and your future. You can say no to gridlock, no to cynicism, no to talking tough and acting weak. You can say yes to hope, yes to cooperation, yes to a builder, not a blamer. You can say yes to being strong. You can say, "We in Washington State are sending a message to Washington, DC: America is going forward, not turning back." Ron Sims, the Democratic Congressmen, help us to keep changing this country and moving forward.

God bless you all, and thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. at the Pike Place Market. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Norman Rice of Seattle and Gary Locke, county executive, King County.

Interview With Larry King in Seattle, Washington

November 6, 1994

Mr. King. Welcome to a special Sunday night edition of "Larry King Live." Our special guest is the President of the United States. A beautiful day here in Seattle; it rained earlier this morning, but there's no city like this. You seemed revved up here today.

The President. It's a wonderful city. They've been very good to me. But it's just an exciting place. It's a real future-oriented place with a lot of different kinds of folks. They get together. They work together. It's a real upbeat, positive city.

Midterm Elections

Mr. King. Do you like campaigning again?

The President. I do.

Mr. King. It seemed like you were just campaigning.

The President. I know.

Mr. King. Do you like this?

The President. I do like it. In large measure I like it because it's one of the few times I get to really go out and put out our record, my message. And I also just like to see the American people. You know, I like to see them excited and energized again.

Mr. King. I remember when you were running. We were in Ocala, and you said to me, "God, I love this."

The President. It was wonderful. Remember that we were in that rodeo arena? Remember that?

Mr. King. Where Elvis Presley once sang.

The President. Yes, that's right.

Mr. King. You were revved up, and you seem the same way now. It would seem that after this time you've been President for 2 years that it's old hat by now.

The President. But these are the people I work for. And perhaps the most frustrating part of being President is how hard it is to stay in touch with them, to stay connected to them, for them to really know what you do on a daily basis. And so to be able to come back out here with someone like Ron Sims, whom I admire so much, that represents what's best in this country, that's cutting against all this cynicism and negativism that is blanketing the airwaves, it's really just a great thing to do.

Negativism in Politics

Mr. King. What do you make of that? We'll start there. And there's lots of bases we're going to cover, of these—lots of radio talk shows, other areas of negativism, that's more than just criticism. It's anger. What do you make of it?

The President. Well, it's almost like an institutionalized approach to life, you know, that every-